

## MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS WILDLIFE DIVISION

### WILDLIFE DIVISION OVERVIEW

The Wildlife Division is responsible for the conservation and management of more than 600 Montana birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians and their habitat. Activities related to the Wildlife Program include coordination and planning for a number of species management programs, monitoring the status of wildlife and habitats, conserving and enhancing wildlife habitat and managing those habitats, and providing opportunity for public enjoyment of wildlife through hunting, trapping, and viewing. The program manages animals legislatively categorized as big game, nongame wildlife, migratory game birds, upland game, furbearers, and threatened and endangered species. Responsibilities within the Wildlife Division fall into four major themes: Species Management, Habitat, Access, and Wildlife Conflict. The Wildlife Division in Helena develops priorities in conjunction with FWP's seven administrative regions where the programs are carried out at the field level.

### WILDLIFE BUREAU ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Provided over 2.4 million hunter days for big game and upland game birds, resulting in a positive economic impact to local communities of more than \$271 million.
- Assumed full management for wolves and implemented hunting and trapping seasons. Certified more than 2,400 people to trap wolves. About 18,000 hunters purchased a wolf hunting license.
- Convened several citizen advisory groups to help FWP address sensitive issues including upland game, elk-brucellosis, archery elk, and private land and public wildlife.
- Worked closely with IT on development of and implemented a survey and inventory database that allows centralized storage and analysis of big game survey data.
- Enrolled 1,230 landowners for the 2012 hunting season and provided nearly 8 million acres of free public hunting access through the Block Management Program.
- Continued research on the role of predation and habitat in limiting elk recruitment in the Bitterroot.
- Gathered information on grizzly bear populations and trends, which has directly informed efforts to delist grizzlies in Montana in the GYE and NCDE recovery areas.
- Maintained wildlife management area lands consistent with the Good Neighbor Policy.
- Initiated a sustainable-yield study on all forested WMAs
- Wrapped up a 5-year diversity monitoring effort that has filled the data gaps for numerous species aimed at keeping them off the Montana Species of Concern list and potentially the federal ESA list (e.g., leopard frog, black-tailed prairie dog, Sprague's pipit).

### WILDLIFE BUREAU CHALLENGES

- Responding to weather impacts (severe winter, drought) on wildlife populations.

- Maintaining management of resident public wildlife species rather than lose authority to the federal government.
- Improving relations between landowners, sportspersons, and FWP.
- Preparing for potential impacts of climate change on fish and wildlife habitat, species, and policies.
- Addressing wildlife disease issues such as brucellosis, CWD, avian influenza, and more.
- Increasing litigation affecting the management abilities of FWP (lynx, wolverine, wolf).
- Changing landownership, resulting in management issues and loss of opportunity.
- Managing wildlife to address a diversity of interests with limited funding sources.

## **DECISION PACKAGES**

### Present Law Adjustments (Page C-18)

#### **DP 505 – Habitat Montana O&M**

**\$ 110,000**

Provide additional earmarked funding consistent with program income for maintenance of FWP wildlife management areas.

#### **DP 507 – Game Herders for Game Damage Program**

**\$ 11,500**

Restore operations to the game damage program to hire short-term workers under a modified level FTE to herd game animals away from crops and stored hay/grain to mitigate game damage on private property.

#### **DP 508 – Migratory Bird Program Authority**

**\$ 40,000**

Provide operations funding to the Migratory Bird Program to implement the program, including support of wetland project-proposal evaluations and evaluation of completed projects.

#### **DP 509 – Auction Dollars and Non-Game Check Off**

**\$ 164,800**

Restore operations funding consistent with the income from the Nongame Check-Off and Elk, Goat, and Sheep Auction receipts. This will allow for enhanced survey and research efforts. Funding is from earmarked auction accounts and can only be used for these specific species.

### New Proposals (Page C-19)

#### **DP 501 – Funding Shift to PR**

**\$1,000,000**

Substitutes federal P-R dollars for license dollars for those activities that are eligible for federal funding to maximize federal support of base programs while saving general licenses funds.

#### **DP 502 – Funding Shift in Block Management**

**\$1,000,000**

Restores the OTO of \$850,000 using P-R funding rather than Hunting Access funding and refund an additional \$150,000 from Hunting Access to P-R to maintain the current level of funding authority for the Hunting Access Enhancement Program for FY14 and FY15.

#### **DP 503 – Moose Research**

**\$ 150,000**



Requests funding authority to evaluate factors limiting moose populations. Three different moose populations will be studied: East Cabinets, Upper Big Hole Valley, and the Rocky Mountain Front. Moose auction dollars will be matched with federal P-R dollars to fund the project.

**DP 504 – Sage grouse Research**

**\$ 100,000**

Requests funding for FWP's and NRCS's long-term research project on the effectiveness of different grazing systems. The intent is to demonstrate that grazing systems can be compatible with sage grouse conservation. Funding is being requested to leverage license dollars with federal P-R dollars at a 3:1 match, vs. current 1:1 match of NRCS dollars.

**DP 506 – Wolf Program**

**\$ 535,813**

Provides funding consistent with the income from the wolf license sales and the federal funding that FWP will receive for wolf management. This request includes 7.0 FTE and \$160,696 of operations (NOTE: this is different than what is in LFD book).

**DP 6101 – PDC Fee Allocation**

**\$ (1,358)**

Removes funding authority for the Professional Development Center as that authority is being sought through the Management and Finance Division (DP 6101).

## FWP - 5201

NP506 - Wolf Program				NP506 Amendment				NP506 - Total Wolf Program			
	FY 2014	FY 2015		FY 2014	FY 2015			FY 2014	FY 2015		
	FTE	FTE		FTE	FTE			FTE	FTE		
<b>POSITION DETAILS</b>											
Conflict Specialist	4.75	6.50	191215	0.75	-1.00			5.5	5.5		
Conservation Tech	0.00	0.00	194944	1.50	1.50			1.5	1.5		
Total	4.75	6.50		2.25	0.50			7.0	7.0		
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>											
Personal Services	260,627	357,472		114,491	17,646			375,118	375,118		
Operations	71,069	72,724		89,027	87,372			160,096	160,096		
Total	331,696	430,196		203,518	105,018			535,214	535,214		
<b>FUNDING</b>											
02423 - Wolf License	331,696	430,196		(157,746)	(173,298)			173,950	256,898		
03403 - Federal				361,264	278,316			361,264	278,316		
Total	331,696	430,196		203,518	105,018			535,214	535,214		

\*\*NP506 is being amended to add federal funding since it cannot be appropriated through a budget amendment because it was in a Cat/Dog bill (SB348) in the 2011 Legislative Session.

EXHIBIT 6DATE 02/06/2013HB Joint Approps sub Natural Resources and Transportation